

4 November 1986  
MBK-6020

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, Foreign Broadcast Information Service

THROUGH: Chief, Operations Group

SUBJECT: Monthly Report -- Bangkok Bureau -- October 1986

## I. GENERAL

A. The opposition parties in the Thai Parliament continue to cause headaches for the government. Even though the commerce minister survived a no confidence motion in parliament over a scandal involving the importation of uncertified Burmese logs, pressure continues to be brought to bear and most observers have concluded he will resign within a short time. The opposition has been very adroit in timing the attacks on government members and policies. As soon as one scandal is dealt with or begins to subside, a new one is ushered in. At present, in addition to the continuing speculation over the fate of the commerce minister, scandals over tapioca pricing and the renewal of a television station's license with allegations of massive kickbacks are beginning to emerge. In the midst of all of this the top military leader, General Chawalit, and others have voiced displeasure over the political squabbling, thus bringing the military into the fray. The government has had a difficult time getting on with the business at hand, and only time will tell whether it can be effective in the face of this sustained and clever pressure from the opposition.

B. Indian Prime Minister Gandhi paid a short visit to Thailand on 19-20 October -- the first ever by an Indian prime minister. The visit was part of a tour of three Southeast Asian countries and Australia and demonstrates India's increased interest in this part of the world. While he was in Bangkok the Thai prime minister was able to elicit a promise that India would become more active in the search for a solution to the Cambodian situation.

## II. OPERATIONS

### A. Monitorial/Editorial

1. On the 2d, the Bureau monitored a report from AFP that the Indian prime minister had been the subject of an assassination attempt. Indian radios and, using ROSET, Indian television were monitored to obtain primary source confirmation. Some hours after the first reports, Indian television finally carried a short special report featuring a video clip of an obviously unhurt Gandhi along with a very short interview with him indicating everything was alright. The Bureau filed an editorial report on the television broadcast which was run on the Wire. It is interesting to note that the radio and television did not interrupt their coverage of the cricket test match with Australia but waited some hours until an intermission before broadcasting the Gandhi material.

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2. The Vietnam Unit is currently very busy with material related to the upcoming sixth party congress. Due to heightened consumer interest in this congress the unit has processed many district-level reports -- something not done for previous congresses. At month's end about two-thirds of the provincial congress meetings had been reported on by the media. Thus filed wordage for the unit during October was 24 percent above September's figure. Coordination with AG and NEAD resulted in NEAD taking over a number of lengthy press items to permit the Bureau to concentrate on more perishable congress material.

3. Thai media reported in some detail fighting between Thai and Vietnamese troops over a hill inside Thailand reportedly occupied by the Vietnamese some time ago. This was the most serious level of military action between the two for some time. In the end, Thai forces reoccupied the hill.

4. Beginning on the 15th, the Bureau covered the presidential elections in Bangladesh. President Ershad won amid reports of some violence and of widespread vote fraud as well.

5. Without warning, Lao media reported on the 30th that Phoumi Vongvichit had been named "acting president" in place of Souphanouvong, who is stepping aside for "health reasons." As luck would have it the Bureau's commo went out almost simultaneously with the announcement, and the item had to be filed by telex. It is not entirely clear whether Souphanouvong might reassume the presidency at some future date or not. Upon monitoring the report the Bureau instituted an open watch on Lao media, but nothing unusual was noted.

6. Major Indian television newscasts were studied during the month. One of the evening casts will be put on regular coverage in early November, and the Bureau will continue to watch for ad hoc programming of possible interest.

#### B. Lateral Services

One item was processed during the month at the request of the Embassy in Laos.

#### C. Technical

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1. All channels from the old microwave have been transferred to the new microwave system. Transfer of channels went very smoothly with minimum down time encountered. [redacted]

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2. The modems on the PC's in the Bureau library and in the cruising room at Bang Ping are now operative. As a result, [redacted] and [redacted] can compose their outgoing messages in Bang Ping and transmit them to the Bureau by modem where they are downloaded on a diskette and then sent out automatically, thereby saving a day in transit time.

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## III. ADMINISTRATION

## A. Personnel

1. On 26 October Chief of the Communications Unit [ ] was promoted to FBN 7. Also honored for their excellent work since becoming shorthanded in March was the entire Cambodian Unit of Chief [ ]. All received QSI's.

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2. [ ], the new Bureau engineer, and [ ], the new Bureau secretary, arrived PCS 1 October from Vienna, Austria via home leave in the States. Bureau Chief [ ] and his wife [ ] returned from R&R 1 October, on the same plane.

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3. [ ] the outgoing Bureau engineer and secretary, left 19 October 1986 PCS to FED. Thai National Intelligence Agency Director Piya Chakkaphak hosted a luncheon for [ ] at the Shangrila Hotel on 15 October.

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4. South Asian Unit Chief [ ] returned to Bangkok 21 October after recovering from open heart surgery which occurred while on end of tour travel in the United States. [ ] has made an excellent recovery and was on the golf links 2 days after his return.

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5. The Bureau's run of newborn girls continued this month: Thai/Chinese monitor [ ] became the father of [ ] on 14 October and [ ] wife gave birth to [ ] on 25 October.

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6. On a much sadder note the father of Senior Teletypist [ ] passed away 31 October.

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## IV. VISITS

A. Nicosia Bureau Arabic Unit Chief [ ] and his wife visited the Bureau 9 October while on personal travel in the area.

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B. Embassy officers Barbara Clark and Mary McNally were given a Bureau briefing and tour on 15 October.

C. DCM Joseph Winder, who had visited the Bureau in April, shortly after his arrival, visited Bang Ping on 16 October for a briefing and tour followed by lunch at the Bang Pu Seafood Restaurant.

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V. COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

The son of Thai Monitor [REDACTED], 14, walked off with first prize in the Bangkok Chopin Society piano competition in the 9-15 age category. The prize is 8,000 Baht (U.S. \$300) and a week-long trip to Poland next May.

[REDACTED]  
Chief, Bangkok Bureau

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RMB/cia

Attachment: Monthly Production Report

## BANGKOK BUREAU PRODUCTION REPORT FOR OCTOBER 1986

I. TOTALS FROM ALL SOURCES:

TOTAL PUBLISHABLE WORDAGE FILED DURING MONTH:	760,300
TOTAL NON-PUBLISHABLE WORDAGE FILED DURING MONTH:	256,130
TOTAL NUMBER OF PUBLISHABLE ITEMS FILED DURING MONTH:	1,613

	<u>BROAD- CASTS</u>	<u>PRESS AGENCIES</u>	<u>PUBLI- CATION</u>
II. <u>INPUT OF REGULAR COVERAGE:</u> (minutes or issues per week)	20,790 min.	28,470 min.	264.00 issues
III. <u>OUTPUT FROM ROSET SOURCES:</u> (publishable words per month)			

INDIA

Delhi PTI in English		1,070	
Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English	370		

INDONESIA

Jakarta TVRI Television Network in Indonesian	340		
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MALAYSIA

Kuala Lumpur BERNAMA in English		13,550	
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SRI LANKA

Colombo Lanka Puwath in English		14,560	
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IV. <u>OUTPUT FROM ALL OTHER SOURCES:</u> (publishable words per month)			
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AUSTRALIA

Melbourne Overseas Service in English	23,960		
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BANGLADESH

Dhaka Overseas Service in English	170		
Dhaka Domestic Service in English	6,130		
Dhaka Domestic Service in Bengali	160		

	<u>BROAD- CASTS</u>	<u>PRESS AGENCIES</u>	<u>PUBLI- CATION</u>
<u>BANGLADESH (continued)</u>			
Dhaka Domestic Service in Bengali	160		
Dhaka THE BANGLADESH OBSERVER in English			50
<u>BRUNEI</u>			
Kuala Belait THE BORNEO BULLETIN in English			230
<u>BURMA</u>			
Rangoon Domestic Service in Burmese	9,610		
<u>CAMBODIA</u>			
Phnom Penh Domestic Service in Cambodian	33,920		
Phnom Penh SPK in English		16,510	
Phnom Penh SPK in French		5,550	
<u>CHINA</u>			
Beijing International Service in Bengali	180		
Beijing in Cambodian to Cambodia	2,060		
<u>CLANDESTINE</u>			
(Clandestine) Voice of the People of Burma in Burmese	5,900		
(Clandestine) Voice of Democratic Kampuchea in Cambodian	32,180		
(Clandestine) Voice of the Khmer in Cambodian	6,470		
(Clandestine) Voice of the National Army Democratic Kampuchea in Cambodian	16,900		
<u>HONG KONG</u>			
Hong Kong AFP in English		60,980	
<u>INDIA</u>			
Delhi General Overseas Service in English	5,360		
Delhi Domestic Service in English	36,280		
Delhi ISI Diplomatic Information Service in English		1,760	

	<u>BROAD- CASTS</u>	<u>PRESS AGENCIES</u>	<u>PUBLI- CATION</u>
<u>INDIA (continued)</u>			
Bombay THE TIMES OF INDIA in English			2,210
Calcutta THE STATESMAN in English			1,740
Delhi PATRIOT in English			2,780
Delhi THE HINDUSTAN TIMES in English			3,930
<u>INDONESIA</u>			
Jakarta International Service in English	1,180		
Jakarta Domestic Service in Indonesian	9,790		
Jakarta JAKARTA POST in English			3,620
Jakarta THE INDONESIA TIMES in English			770
Jakarta KOMPAS in Indonesian			2,350
Jakarta MERDEKA in Indonesian			870
Jakarta SINAR HARAPAN in Indonesian			5,060
<u>LAOS</u>			
Vientiane Domestic Service in Laos	37,470		
Vientiane KPL in English		14,980	
<u>MALAYSIA</u>			
Kuala Lumpur International Service in English	6,810		
Kuala Lumpur Domestic Service in English	3,820		
Kuala Lumpur Domestic Service in Malay	820		
Kuala Lumpur NEW STRAITS TIMES in English			1,660
Kuala Lumpur BERITA HARIAN in Malay			1,130
<u>NEPAL</u>			
Katmandu External Service in English	420		
Katmandu THE RISING NEPAL in English			510

	<u>BROAD- CASTS</u>	<u>PRESS AGENCIES</u>	<u>PUBLI- CATION</u>
<u>PAKISTAN</u>			
Karachi Overseas Service in Urdu	720		
Karachi Domestic Service in English	9,820		
Karachi Domestic Service in Urdu	13,580		
Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English			9,340
Karachi DAWN in English			6,000
Rawalpindi THE PAKISTAN Times in English			1,170
Karachi JASARAT in Urdu			1,830
Lahore Jang in Urdu			530
<u>SINGAPORE</u>			
Singapore Domestic Service in English	3,500		
Singapore THE STRAITS TIMES in English			3,270
Singapore THE SUNDAY TIMES in English			290
<u>SRI LANKA</u>			
Colombo International Service in English	4,030		
Colombo Domestic Service in English	140		
Colombo SUN in English			1,560
Colombo WEEKEND in English			500
<u>THAILAND</u>			
Bangkok Voice of Free Asia in English	3,760		
Bangkok Voice of Free Asia in Thai	2,880		
Bangkok Domestic Service in English	6,230		
Bangkok Television Feed in English	2,010		
Bangkok Domestic Service in Thai	9,010		
Bangkok First Army Division Radio in Thai	1,250		
Bangkok Television Service in Thai	5,590		
Bangkok BANGKOK POST in English			41,980



	<u>BROAD- CASTS</u>	<u>PRESS AGENCIES</u>	<u>PUBLI- CATION</u>
<u>THAILAND (continued)</u>			
Bangkok BANGKOK WORLD in English			5,900
Bangkok THE NATION in English			28,730
Bangkok XING XIAN RIBAO in Chinese			3,730
Bangkok ZHONG HUA RIBAO in Chinese			1,550
Bangkok LAK THAI in Thai			3,090
Bangkok MATICHON in Thai			4,820
Bangkok NAEO NA in Thai			5,240
Bangkok SIAM RAT in Thai			2,360
Bangkok SIAM RAT SAPDA WICHAN in Thai			1,250
Bangkok THAI RAT in Thai			880
<u>UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS</u>			
Moscow in Burmese to Burma	1,180		
Moscow in Cambodian to Cambodia	680		
Moscow in Lao to Laos	1,510		
<u>UNITED KINGDOM</u>			
London BBC World Service in English	970		
<u>VIETNAM</u>			
Hanoi International Service in English	7,270		
Hanoi International Service in Thai	910		
Hanoi Domestic Service in Vietnamese	147,640		
Hanoi VNA in English		410	
Hanoi NHAN DAN in Vietnamese			7,240
Hanoi QUAN DOI NHAN DAN in Vietnamese			2,540
Hanoi TAP CHI QUAN DOI NHAN DAN in Vietnamese			7,240